

Cut few must
not ring

to light



ROSE HARTWICK THORPE, ¹⁹³⁹ POETESS, DIES IN SAN DIEGO

SAN DIEGO, July 20.—(P)—The party at radio station KFSD Wednesday after her 89th birthday, death.

took Rose Hartwick Thorpe, poetess whose most famous work was "The Curfew Must Not Ring Tonight."

Victim of a heart attack, Mrs. Thorpe died last night at the home of her son-in-law, Eli Barnes, with whom she had been living. Her daughter died several years ago.

Mrs. Thorpe, who was born in Mishawaka, Ind., and was graduated in 1883 from Hillsdale College, had lived in San Diego for 50 years. She was guest of honor at a birthday

Other works written by Mrs. Thorpe included "Fred's Dark Days," "Nina Bruce," "The Fenton Family," "The Chester Girls," "The Year's Best Days," "Temperance Poems," "Ringing Ballads," "The Yule Log," and "Poetical Works of Rose Hartwick Thorpe."

"Sunset Land," written in 1927, was her last major work.

Her husband, E. Carson Thorpe, whom she married in 1871, died in 1916.

Noted Woman Author Passes

SAN DIEGO, July 20 (U.P.)—Mrs. Rose Hartwick Thorpe, author of the poem "Curfew Must Not Ring Tonight," was dead today. She was 89 years old.

Death was attributed to heart disease and came last night at the home of her son-in-law, Hartwick Barnes, in San Diego.

Funeral arrangements have not yet been completed.

When she was but 16 years old and a student in high school at Litchfield, Michigan, Mrs. Thorpe—then Rose Hartwick—wrote on a scratchy slate the poem which was to bring her world-wide fame.

It was her first long poem and one which she considered so lacking in merit that for two years it was neglected, recopied in a notebook containing many other of the young poetess' works and forgotten.

For two years she kept up a steady stream of contributions to a Detroit newspaper, then one week when she became ill and was unable to send anything, her mother discovered "Curfew Must Not Ring Tonight" and sent it to the paper.

NOT COPYRIGHTED

Immediately it was recopied in hundreds of publications and received wide acclaim, but through lack of copyright protection, Mrs. Thorpe never received direct remuneration for the poem. The only income derived from it came from the sale of autographed copies.

Although she wrote many poems, articles and short stories, the "Curfew" is the only one which achieved fame.

Mrs. Thorpe, who was born July 18, 1850 in South Bend, Indiana, celebrated her 89th birthday with a radio party last Tuesday.

Surviving her are three grandchildren: Hartwick Barnes, San Diego, Franklin Barnes, Julian, Cal., and Mrs. S. A. Fay, San Diego.

Mabel E. Morrin.

From

Aunt Electra.

X'mas 1890.

**"CURFEW MUST NOT
RING TO NIGHT"**

Mrs. Constance W. W.





**"CURFEW MUST NOT
RING TO NIGHT"**

BY
Rosa Hartwick Thorpe.



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E.C.





England's sun was slowly setting o'er the hill-
tops far away.

Filling all the land with beauty at the close of
one sad day;

And its last rays kissed the forehead of a man
and maiden fair,—

He with steps so slow and weary; she with
sunny, floating hair;

He with bowed head, sad and thoughtful ; she
with lips so cold and white, --

Struggled to keep back the murmur, "Curfew
must not ring to-night."

"Sexton," Bessie's white lips faltered, pointing
to the prison old,

With its walls so tall and gloomy, moss-grown
walls, dark, damp, and cold, --



"I've a lover in that prison, doomed this very
night to die

At the ringing of the curfew; and no earthly
help is nigh.

Cromwell will not come till sunset," and her
lips grew strangely white,

As she spoke in husky whispers, "Curfew must
not ring to night."





"Bessie," calmly spoke the sexton (every word
pierced her young heart,

Like a gleaming death-winged arrow, like a
deadly-poisoned dart),

"Long, long years I've rung the curfew from
that gloomy, shadowed tower!







Every evening, just at sunset, it has tolled the
twilight hour.

I have done my duty, ever, tried to do it just
and right;

Now I'm old, I will not miss it. Curfew bell
must ring to night!"





Wild her eyes and pale her features, stern and
white her thoughtful brow;

And within her heart's deep centre Bessie
made a solemn vow.

She had listened while the judges read, with-
out a tear or sigh,—

"At the ringing of the Curfew Basil Underwood
must die."





And her breath came fast and faster, and her

eyes grew large and bright;

One low murmur, faintly spoken, "Curfew *must*

not ring to-night!"

She with quick step bounded forward, sprang

within the old church-door.

Left the old man coming slowly, paths he'd

trod so oft before.



NOT one moment paused the maiden

But with cheek and brow aglow

Staggered up the gloomy tower,

Where the bell swung to and fro:

As she climbed the slimy ladder,

On which fell no ray of light,

Upward still, her pale lips saying,

"Curfew *shall not* ring to night."



She has reached the topmost ladder; o'er
her hangs the great, dark bell,
Awful is the gloom beneath her, like the
pathway down to hell.
See! the ponderous tongue is swinging;
'tis the hour of curfew now,
And the sight has chilled her bosom,
stopped her breath, and paled her brow.
Shall she let it ring? No, never! Her eyes
flash with sudden light,
As she springs, and grasps it firmly:
"Curfew *shall not* ring to-night!"
Out she swung, - far out. The city seemed
a speck of light below, -



There 'twixt heaven and earth suspended,
As the bell swung to and fro.

And the sexton at the bell-rope, old and deaf,
heard not the bell,

Sadly thought that twilight curfew rang
young Basil's funeral knell.

Still the maiden, clinging firmly, quivering
lip and fair face white,

Stilled her frightened hearts wild beating:

"Curfew shall not ring to-night!"

It was o'er, the bell ceased swaying; and the
maiden stepped once more

Firmly on the damp old ladder, where, for
hundred years before



Human foot had not been planted, The brave
deed that she had done

Should be told long ages after —
as the rays of setting sun

Light the sky with golden beauty, aged sire's
with heads of white

Tell the children why the curfew did not ring
that one sad night

O'er the distant hills comes Cromwell. Bessie
sees him; and her brow,

Lately white with sickening horror, has no
anxious traces now:

At his feet she tells her story, shows her
hands, all bruised and torn;

And her sweet young face, still haggard with
the anguish it had worn,





Touched his heart with sudden pity lit his
eyes with misty light

"Go! your lover lives," cried Cromwell "Curfew
shall not ring to night"

Wide they flung the massive portals, led the
prisoner forth to die,

All his bright young life before him "Neath
the darkening English sky,

Bessie came, with flying footsteps,
eyes aglow with lovelight sweet,

Kneeling on the turf beside him, laid his pardon
at his feet.

In his brave, strong arms he clasped her,
kissed the face upturned and white,

Whispered, "Darling, you have saved me,
curfew will not ring to night"

Rose Hartwick Thorpe

By FLORENA A. HAYLER ³

WHILE there is scarcely an older who has not read and wept over that world famous poem, "Curfew Must Not Ring To-night!" there are, perhaps, many who do not know that its author, Rose Hartwick Thorpe, is still living. In a home of beauty and distinction, this charmingly gracious and gifted woman continues to act her role of author and benefactor amidst ideal surroundings in San Diego, California, the city of her adoption; and July 18 will celebrate her eighty-second birthday anniversary.

Commenting upon the celebration of a previous birthday, Mrs. Thorpe said to the writer, "I had so many gifts, flowers, letters of loving appreciation and charming tokens of all kinds, that I am quite bewildered. . . . My apartment and my daughter's big living room downstairs are bowers of bloom, and my table is loaded with birthday gifts. I never thought so many people would lay such a wealth of love before me."

To her friends, however, there was nothing surprising in this expression of loyalty, for she is recognized as the outstanding figure in San Diego's literary colony which numbers among its hundred and more members, contributors to all the leading magazines of the world. In addition to being an author of the first rank, Mrs. Thorpe is also a philanthropist in the broadest sense, giving of her strength, her money, and her art, unstintingly, toward the advancement of every worthwhile cause.

To the discouraged she is ever a source of encouragement; to the needy, a friend; and to the young and aspiring writer an inspiration.

Mrs. Thorpe has produced thirty books besides innumerable short stories, poems, and articles. She was a former contributor to "Golden Days," "Saturday Evening Post," "Youth's Companion," "Country Gentleman," and other magazines. She has been honored by having her poem "Curfew Must Not Ring To-night" (which she wrote at the age of 17) copied in newspaper after newspaper and magazine after magazine, both here and in foreign countries, and but recently it was broadcast over the radio. Kings and queens and high offi-

cials have shown her many marked attentions because of it; and Hillsdale College, Michigan, conferred upon her the degree of Master of Arts.

What a wonderful thing it is and what a blessed satisfaction it must be when one nears the end of this trail we call life, to find oneself so beloved!

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